

November 04, 2005- Rep. Rahall Meets With Marshall President To Discuss Vision For The Future

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WASHINGTON, DC - U.S. Rep. Nick J. Rahall (D-WV) met with Steven Kopp, the newly appointed President of Marshall University, in his Washington, D.C. office recently to discuss in detail the new President's vision for the future of Marshall University.

"I appreciated the opportunity to sit down and talk with President Kopp about the many opportunities that exist for growth at Marshall University," Rahall said. "We had a very informative, enlightening discussion and I hope it was the first of many."

For more than two hours, the two state leaders discussed, in detail, the new President's ideas for growth and development of the University, including an innovative long-term strategic planning process which President Kopp hopes to implement during 2006 and his plans for helping Marshall University increase research and development efforts to strengthen both the undergraduate and graduate student experience at Marshall University.

"President Kopp is proud of the many successes Marshall has already seen in the fields of research and bio-technology, as well as transportation, and he has a clear-cut plan that I believe will produce many future accomplishments," Rahall said.

Rahall and Kopp also discussed the important regional and state economic development projects under way at the Rahall Transportation Institute (RTI) and expressed their mutual desire to see the award-winning rail track stability research program currently housed with RTI at Marshall University expanded to include extensive research programs on railroad security challenges and general rail operations.

"We both agree that this program is a perfect exercise in what I call the critical three T's-transportation, technology and tourism," Rahall said. "Researchers are helping improve our state's transportation infrastructure in addition to helping prepare our citizens for well-paying transportation careers and creating new transportation businesses and jobs in our state."

In addition, Rahall expressed his sincere desire for the National Maritime Enhancement Institute at Marshall University to continue pushing for development of the Ohio River and helping the region take full economic advantage of the Port of Huntington, the nation's largest inland port and the seventh largest waterway port in the United States.

Both leaders also agreed on the importance of expanding the role which the Center for Environmental, Geotechnical, and Applied Sciences (CEGAS) plays in the environmental arena within West Virginia and the multiple opportunities that could arise from the new Brownfields Assistance Center recently established at Marshall University.

"The Center at Marshall has been charged with providing technical assistance to local government and economic development authorities in the entire southern half of the state on all matters related to Brownfields designation and funding for remediation efforts," Rahall said. "The relationship between CEGAS and the Huntington District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is a wonderful thing for West Virginia and I applaud Marshall for the work they have done as part of this continuing partnership."

Kopp, who was elected President of Marshall University in June by a unanimous decision, said his meeting with the Congressman in Washington allowed him to personally share his goals, seek advice and guidance, and put forth a plan whereby the two begin to work hand-in-glove to take Marshall University to the next level.

"It is not every day nor every Member of Congress who takes the time to discuss in detail with you the many facets of the University," Kopp said. "Congressman Rahall has worked tirelessly on behalf of Marshall University to put in place infrastructure that will help take Marshall to the next level in terms of research and undergraduate and graduate degree offerings."

"Congressman Rahall has the history and vast knowledge of our State that has allowed Marshall University to be a very strong economic catalyst for all of southern West Virginia," Kopp said. "We are honored and excited about our future at Marshall, and with the continued support of our good friend and Congressman Nick J. Rahall and our entire West Virginia Congressional Delegation, the future impact of Marshall University is immeasurable," Kopp added.

Rahall thanked the President for his visit and expressed confidence in his leadership.

"I have always been and always will be a tireless advocate for Marshall and believe that under President Kopp's leadership the University is going to experience growth in all areas," Rahall said. "I look forward to working closely with him to accomplish our shared goals."